

New law (R.S. 17:64) establishes a separate school system and school board for the Zachary community in East Baton Rouge Parish. Specifies the geographic boundaries of the school system and provides that the Zachary Community School Board shall be composed of nine members elected from single-member districts. Requires that members be electors and meet the qualifications for office provided for in R.S. 17:52(E) for school boards. Additionally requires that each member of the board meet the requirements of R.S. 17:52(D) specifying that school board members be able to read and write.

Provides that, by not later than January 15, 2000, the governing authority of Zachary shall develop and adopt a plan to divide the Zachary community school system into nine single-member districts from each of which one member of the Zachary Community School Board shall be elected. States that the districts shall be drawn in a manner such that each member of the Zachary Community School Board represents as nearly as possible the same number of persons, using population figures from the latest federal decennial census, and that the districts shall be effective in time for qualifying for office for a special election for school board members to be held at the time and place of voting for members of congress in 2000. Provides that school board members elected at this time shall take office at noon on the second Monday in January next following the election and serve until the taking of office of the school board members elected in 2002.

Provides that prior to the final adoption of the apportionment plan required by new law, the governing authority of Zachary shall order a public hearing on the proposed plan and shall cause to be published in its official journal at least 20 days prior to the date of such hearing, the time and place thereof, a general summary and map of the proposed plan, and the times and places where copies of the proposed plan are available for public inspection.

States that except as otherwise provided for the initial elected members of the board, each member of the Zachary Community School Board shall be elected at the time and place provided by law generally for local school board members. Provides that the members of the Zachary Community School Board elected in 2002 shall assume office as otherwise provided by law generally for local school board members, and such members and their successors in office shall serve for four-year concurrent terms. Provides also that vacancies on the board shall be filled as provided by law generally for local school boards.

States that the organization of the Zachary Community School Board as well as the board's powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities shall be as provided by law generally for local school boards. Provides also that compensation for board members and reimbursement for expenses shall be as provided by law generally for local school boards. Requires the school board to adopt rules, regulations, and procedures consistent with law to effectuate new law and to administer the duties, functions, and responsibilities of the board.

States that the Zachary Community School Board shall begin its initial year of actual operation providing for the education of students within its jurisdiction at the beginning of the 2001-2002 school year. Provides that at such time, all lands, buildings and improvements, facilities, and other property having title vested in the public and subject to management, administration, and control by the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board for public education purposes but located within the geographic boundaries of the Zachary community school system or used to provide student transportation services to such facilities, or both, shall be managed, administered, and controlled by the Zachary

Community School Board.

Provides that in the absence of a mutual agreement between the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board and the Zachary Community School Board on questions of ownership of the lands, buildings and improvements, facilities, and other property having title vested in the public and subject to management, administration, and control by the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board for public education purposes but located within the geographic boundaries of the Zachary Community School System or used to provide student transportation services to such facilities, or both, the Zachary Community School Board shall enter into arbitration proceedings to resolve such questions.

Specifies that no appropriation of state funds shall be made to assist or support the initial establishment of the Zachary community school system. States, however, that this provision shall not limit the school system's participation in the minimum foundation program or any other appropriation applicable to other Louisiana public school systems.

New law (R.S. 17:64.1) also creates an interim school board for the Zachary community school system and provides that the interim board shall continue in existence until the taking of office of the initial members of the Zachary Community School Board elected in 2000.

Provides for the interim school board to be composed of nine members, with one member appointed from each of the nine single-member districts. Requires that interim members be electors and meet the qualifications for office provided for in R.S. 17:52(E) for school boards. Provides also that each member of the interim school board shall meet the requirements of R.S. 17:52(D) specifying that school board members be able to read and write. Specifies that membership on the interim school board shall not disqualify an otherwise eligible person from qualifying as a candidate in the 2000 election for initial members of the Zachary Community School Board.

Provides for all members of the interim school board to be appointed by the governor within 10 days after the single-member districts provided for in new law have received preclearance as provided for in the federal Voting Rights Act. States that interim board members shall serve until the taking of office of the initial members of the Zachary Community School Board elected in 2000. Requires that members appointed by the governor be from a list of nominees. Provides for the state representatives from Districts 62 and 63 and the state senators from Districts 13 and 15 to each nominate three qualified persons for each position to be appointed by the governor.

Provides that a vacancy on the interim school board shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

States that the organization of the interim school board as well as the board's powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities shall be as provided by law generally for local school boards. Provides also that compensation for board members and reimbursement for expenses be as provided by law generally for local school boards. Requires the interim school board to adopt rules, regulations, and procedures consistent with law to effectuate new law and to administer the duties, functions, and responsibilities of the interim board. Additionally requires the interim school board to call a special election to elect the initial members of the Zachary Community School Board. Provides that this election shall be held at the time and place of voting for members of congress in 2000.

States that certain statutory provisions relative to open meetings and public records shall be applicable to the interim school board and its members.

Specifies that all authority granted to the interim school board by new law shall expire upon the taking of office of the initial members of the Zachary Community School Board elected in 2000. However, permits the school board, by formal action, to continue the interim school board as an advisory body on matters previously under the jurisdiction of the interim board.

New law (R.S. 17:58.2) provides that after establishment of the Zachary Community School Board and school system, the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board shall develop a plan to divide the parish, excluding the area of the Zachary community school system, into single-member districts from each of which one member of said board shall be elected. States that such districts shall be drawn with as equal population as possible, using population figures from the 2000 decennial federal census.

Specifies that prior to the final adoption of such plan, the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board shall order a public hearing on the proposed plan and shall cause to be published in a newspaper published within the parish of East Baton Rouge, with parishwide circulation, at least 20 days prior to the date of such hearing, the time and place thereof, a general summary and map of the proposed plan, and the times and places where copies of the proposed plan are available for public inspection.

Provides (notwithstanding any law to the contrary) that each elected member of the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board holding office on the date the Zachary Community School Board and school system are established shall serve the remainder of the term of office for which he was elected. States that if a vacancy occurs during said term of office, it shall be filled in accordance with law from districts in effect when filled.

Provides that at the next congressional primary election following the date of the establishment of the Zachary Community School Board and school system, on which a regular election for the election of members of parish school boards would be held, the members of the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board shall be elected from single-member districts adopted in accordance with new law. States that the members so elected and their successors in office shall serve four-year concurrent terms.

Effective if and when the constitutional amendment proposed by Act No. 1403 of the 1999 R.S. granting the Zachary community school system certain authority granted parishes relative to financing schools is adopted and becomes effective.

(Adds R.S. 17:58.2(G), 64, and 64.1)